

Message Text

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ACTION ACDA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 ERDA-05 CIAE-00 H-02 INR-07

IO-11 L-03 NSAE-00 OIC-02 OMB-01 PA-01 PM-04 PRS-01

SAJ-01 SAM-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 TRSE-00 NSC-05 /090 W

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FM USDEL MBFR VIENNA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1446

SECDEF WASHDC

INFO ALL MBFR MISSIONS 0190

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BERLIN

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

USDEL SALT TWO GENEVA

AMEMBASSY ANKARA

S E C R E T MBFR VIENNA 0064

FROM US REP MBFR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, NATO

SUBJ: MBFR NEGOTIATIONS: SUMMARY REPORT FOR PERIOD FEB 16-22, 1976

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: THE FOURTH WEEK OF THE CURRENT ROUND OF THE VIENNA FORCE REDUCTIONS NEGOTIATIONS SAW THE INTRODUCTION OF THE ANTICIPATED NEW EASTERN REDUCTION PROPOSAL. THE PROPOSAL WAS FIRST GIVEN WESTERN REPS AT THE FEB 17 INFORMAL SESSION OF THE TALKS AND FORMALLY PRESENTED BY SOVIET REP KHLESTOV AT THE FEB 19 PLENARY MEETING. IT PROVIDES FOR US AND SOVIET REDUCTIONS IN A FIRST STAGE OF MANPOWER-2 TO 3 PERCENT OF THE RESPECTIVE

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WARSAW PACT AND NATO TOTALS IN CENTRAL EUROPE, PLUS ARMAMENTS.

OTHER DIRECT PARTICIPANTS WOULD MAKE AN INITIAL GENERAL COMMITMENT TO REDUCE IN A 1977/78 SECOND STAGE, WITH THEIR FORCES FROZEN AT PRESENT LEVELS IN THE INTERIM. IN THE FEB 17 SESSION, US REP SAID THAT WESTERN REPS WOULD COMMENT IN DUE COURSE ON THE NEW EASTERN PROPOSAL. HE STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE ATTACHED BY THE WEST TO THE DEC 16 NUCLEAR OFFER AND THE BELIEF THAT THE WESTERN PROPOSALS REPRESENTED THE RIGHT APPROACH TO AN AGREEMENT. AS PRELIMINARY TACTICS, THE AD HOC GROUP DECIDED TO AVOID TAKING A DEFINITIVE POSITION ON THE LATEST EASTERN INITIATIVE WHILE DEMONSTRATING THE UNSUITABILITY OF INDIVIDUAL ASPECTS AND CONTINUING TO PRESS THE EAST FOR ACCEPTANCE OF THE ALLIED PROGRAM. END SUMMARY.

2. AS HAD BEEN ANTICIPATED FOR SOME TIME THE EAST THIS WEEK PUT FORWARD A NEW REDUCTION PROPOSAL IN VIENNA. THE TEXT, ORIGINALLY GIVEN TO WESTERN REPS AT THE FEB 17 INFORMAL SESSION OF THE TALKS, PROVIDES INTER ALIA FOR:

A) MANPOWER REDUCTIONS BY SOVIET AND US FORCES ONLY IN A 1976 FIRST STAGE BY AN EQUAL PERCENTAGE (APPROX 2-3 PERCENT) OF THE RESPECTIVE WARSAW PACT AND NATO TOTALS IN CENTRAL EUROPE;

B) REDUCTIONS BY THE US AND USSR OF 300 TANKS, 54 NUCLEAR-CAPABLE AIRCRAFT; AND AN UNSPECIFIED EQUAL NUMBER OF OPERATIONAL-TACTICAL MISSILE LAUNCHERS TOGETHER WITH THEIR WARHEADS, 36 SAM LAUNCHERS; AND ONE ARMY CORPS HEADQUARTERS.

C) ALL OTHER DIRECT PARTICIPANTS WOULD ASSUME CLEARLY FORMULATED OBLIGATIONS TO FREEZE THEIR FORCES AT PRESENT LEVELS AND TO REDUCE THESE FORCES IN A SUBSEQUENT STAGE IN 1977/78.

D) REDUCTIONS ARE TO BE BY UNITS, AND NOT BY INDIVIDUAL SERVICEMEN; AND

E) REDUCED SOVIET AND AMERICAN FORCES ARE TO BE WITHDRAWN TO THEIR OWN TERRITORY AND DISBANDED THERE.

3. WESTERN REPS AT THE FEB 17 INFORMAL SESSION ASKED A NUMBER OF FACTUAL QUESTIONS FOR CLARITY OF UNDERSTANDING ABOUT THE PROPOSAL. SOVIET REP KHLESTOV NOTED THE QUERIES, BUT ANSWERED ONLY ONE TO THE EFFECT THAT, IN THE SECOND STAGE, WITHDRAWN UK AND CANADIAN
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FORCES SHOULD ALSO BE DISBANDED. US REP SAID THAT WESTERN REPS WOULD GIVE THEIR COMMENTS IN DUE COURSE, BUT THAT HE WISHED TO DRAW EASTERN ATTENTION TO THE GREAT IMPORTANCE ATTACHED BY WESTERN PARTICIPANTS TO THEIR DEC 16 PROPOSALS WHICH PROVIDED AN EQUITABLE AND COMPREHENSIVE SOLUTION TO THE MAJOR ISSUES OF THE VIENNA NEGOTIATIONS. EARLIER IN THE SESSION, EASTERN REPS MADE A FORCEFUL CRITICISM OF THE AUGMENTED WESTERN PROGRAM, ASSERTING THAT THE WEST STILL SOUGHT UNILATERAL ADVANTAGE.

WESTERN REPS REFUTED THIS ARGUMENTATION.

4. AT THE FEB 19 PLENARY MEETING, SOVIET REP KHLESTOV MADE THE ONLY STATEMENT. HIS PRESENTATION INCORPORATED THE TEXT HANDED TO WESTERN REPS ON FEB 17 AND FORMALLY INTRODUCED THE NEW EASTERN PROPOSAL INTO THE NEGOTIATIONS. KHLESTOV CLAIMED THE PROPOSAL MET A NUMBER OF WESTERN CONCERNS. BEFORE PRESENTING THE NEW EASTERN PROPOSAL, KHLESTOV CRITICIZED THE WESTERN NUCLEAR OFFER OF DEC 16. HE SAID THAT THE WESTERN REDUCTION APPROACH STILL FAILED TO PROVIDE A BASIS FOR ACHIEVING THE AGREED GOALS OF THE VIENNA TALKS. SOVIET REP CONCLUDED HIS STATEMENT WITH THE HOPE THAT WESTERN GOVERNMENTS WOULD STUDY THE NEW EASTERN PROPOSAL IN A CONSTRUCTIVE SPIRIT AND RESPOND POSITIVELY TO IT.

5. AT POST-PLENARY PRESS BRIEFING, THE EASTERN SPOKESMAN ANNOUNCED TABLING BY THE EAST OF A "NEW AND IMPORTANT" PROPOSAL. HE SAID IT COMBINED IN A "CONSTRUCTIVE" MANNER PRINCIPLES AND IDEAS EMBODIES IN PREVIOUS WARSAW PACT PROPOSALS WITH "CERTAIN ELEMENTS" OF THE WESTERN POSITION AND THAT THIS NEW EASTERN INITIATIVE WAS AIMED AT SECURING PROGRESS IN THE TALKS. DESPITE REPEATED QUESTIONS, THE SPOKESMAN DID NOT DISCUSS ANY FURTHER DETAILS. IN REPORTS APPARENTLY BASED ON DELIBERATE EASTERN LEAKS, A NUMBER OF AUSTRIAN AND GERMAN PAPERS AS WELL AS RADIO AUSTRIA INCORRECTLY REPORTED ON FEB 20 THAT THE NEW PROPOSAL SEEMED TO ACCEPT THE WESTERN TWO-PHASE CONCEPT. THE WESTERN PHASING APPROACH FORESEES THAT SOVIET AND AMERICAN TROOPS WOULD BE REDUCED IN A SEPARATE FIRST AGREEMENT, WITH REMAINING DIRECT PARTICIPANTS COMMITTING THEMSELVES ON THE AMOUNT AND TIMING OF THEIR REDUCTIONS IN A SEPARATE NEGOTIATION ONLY AFTER PHASE I REDUCTIONS OF US AND SOVIET FORCES HAD ALREADY TAKEN PLACE. AS FAR AS CAN BE SEEN NOW, THE EASTERN PROPOSAL DOES NOT MEET THESE REQUIREMENTS.

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6. ON FEB 18, THE AD HOC GROUP REVIEWED THE NEW EASTERN REDUCTION PROPOSAL AS REVEALED THE DAY BEFORE. THE GROUP JUDGED THAT IT HAD MANY UNCLEAR ASPECTS, BUT WAS OBVIOUSLY BASED ON THE ORIGINAL EASTERN CONCEPT OF CONTRACTUALIZING THE DISPARITIES IN THE EXISTING RELATIONSHIP OF FORCES IN THE AREA. WITHIN ITS GENERALLY NEGATIVE FRAMEWORK, THE PROPOSAL NEVERTHELESS SEEMED TO HAVE A FEW NEW DEVELOPMENTS WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE EASTERN POSITION, INCLUDING FIRST STAGE REDUCTIONS CONFINED TO US AND SOVIET FORCES. FURTHER, BY SPECIFYING THAT SUCH REDUCTIONS SHOULD BE BY EQUAL PERCENTAGES RATHER THAN EQUAL ABSOLUTE NUMBER, THE PROPOSAL STRENGTHENED THE LOGIC OF THE ALLIED CASE FOR AN EXCHANGE OF DATA.

7. THE AD HOC GROUP CONCLUDED THAT NO FULL ASSESSMENT OF THE EASTERN PROPOSAL WAS YET POSSIBLE OWING TO A NUMBER OF UNCLEAR

ASPECTS. THE GROUP DECIDED AS AN INITIAL TACTIC TO AVOID TAKING
A DEFINITIVE ALLIED POSITION ON THE NEW EASTERN PROPOSAL AS A
WHOLE. WESTERN NEGOTIATORS WOULD, HOWEVER, SEEK TO DEMONSTRATE
THE UNSUITABILITY OF CERTAIN OF ITS INDIVIDUAL ELEMENTS. THEY
WOULD ALSO CONTINUE TO PRESS FOR AN EXCHANGE OF DATA AND FOR
ACCEPTANCE BY THE EAST OF THE WESTERN PROGRAM.RESOR

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